

**Multinational Corporation Strategies, Human
Resource Management Practices and Competitive
Advantage: The Rubber industry in Thailand.**

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Universiti Utara Malaysia

2010

DEDICATION

*To RAJAMAGALA UNIVERSITY OF SRIVIJAYA TECHNOLOGY,
AND MY FAMILY..... FATHER, MOTHER, SISTER AND BROTHER*



Kolej Perniagaan
(College of Business)
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ABSTRACT

Multinational corporations have become increasingly ascendant in the world economy. In order to survive and to achieve profitability, multinational corporations need to create and to sustain competitive advantage. The source of competitive advantage are from both internal and external factors. For the firms competing in the same industry, internal factors such as strategy, management practices, corporate structure, etc. play a major role in the firms' success. This study investigates the relationship between multinational corporation strategies and human resource management practices, which are critical in gaining competitive advantage. This study attempts to combine these three concepts and empirically investigated the proposed framework in the Thai rubber industry by selecting only the multinational corporations. The rubber multinational companies that had participated in this study had consisted of based on Department of Business Development (DBD) in Thailand. Expert interview was used as an instrument for pilot test and to check the questionnaire. The mail survey was employed to collect data. A total of 94 multinational companies had participated in the questionnaire surveys.

The findings of this study revealed that national responsiveness strategy had negative relationship with competitive advantage and global integration with local responsiveness strategy had positive relationship with competitive advantage. Moreover, employee security, reward system at performance level and employee participation had positive relationship with innovation and selection by job competency, reward system at performance level and employee participation had positive relationship with productivity.

In addition, the research had also compared the difference between multinational corporation strategies and human resource management practices. It was found that different multinational corporation strategies lead to different selection by job competence, employee security, clarity of work, reward system at performance level, employee participation and employee contribution. The academic, managerial, and policy implications, limitation of the research of the research and suggestion for further research were also explained.

ABSTRAK

Firma-firma multinasional telah menjadi semakin penting dalam ekonomi dunia. Firma-firma multinasional perlu menjana dan melakukan kelebihan saingan untuk terus wujud dan mencapai keuntungan. Faktor-faktor dalaman dan luaran merupakan sumber kelebihan saingan. Faktor-faktor dalaman seperti strategi, amalan pengurusan, struktur korporat dan lain-lain memainkan peranan penting dalam menentukan kejayaan semua firma. Kajian ini menyelidik faktor-faktor dalaman strategi firma-firma multinasional dan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia yang amat kritikal bagi mencapai kelebihan saingan. Di dalam bidang pengurusan strategik, bilangan kajian empirical ke atas impak-impak strategi firma-firma multinasional dan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia ke atas kelebihan saingan adalah amat sedikit. Kajian ini telah mencuba menggunakan ketiga-tiga konsep ini untuk menguji kerangka kajian yang dicadangkan. Kajian ini menumpukan kepada firma-firma multinasional di dalam industri getah di Negara Thailand. Temuduga pakar telah digunakan sebagai instrument untuk kajian awal dan untuk menyemak sebarang kelemahan dalam kertas soal selidik. Beberapa hipotesis telah dikemukakan bagi mengkaji keberkaitan di antara firma-firma multinasional, amalan pengurusan sumber manusia dengan kelebihan saingan. Hipotesis juga telah diketengahkan untuk menyelidik perbezaan di antara strategi-strategi firma-firma multinasional dengan amalan-amalan firma-firma multinasional. Kelebihan kompetitif dikaji melalui inovasi dan produktiviti syarikat.

Kajian ini mendapati bahawa strategi standardisasi dan strategi respon nasional mempunyai kaitan negatif yang signifikan dengan inovasi dan produktiviti syarikat. Strategi integrasi global beserta strategi respon tempatan mempunyai kaitan positif yang signifikan dengan inovasi dan produktiviti syarikat. Bagi amalan pengurusan

sumber manusia, penemuan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pemilihan melalui kompetensi kerja, sistem ganjaran mengikut tahap prestasi, penglibatan pekerja dan sumbangan pekerja mempunyai kaitan positif yang signifikan dengan inovasi dan produktiviti syarikat. Kajian juga mendapati sekuriti pekerja dan kejelasan kerja tidak mempunyai sebarang kaitan dengan inovasi dan produktiviti syarikat.

Bagi perbezaan di antara strategi pengurusan sumber manusia dan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia dan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia, kajian menunjukkan bahawa firma yang berlainan strategi pengurusan sumber manusianya mempunyai amalan pengurusan sumber manusia yang signifikan kelainannya dari aspek kompetensi pekerjaan, sekuriti pekerja, kejelasan bekerja, sistem ganjaran mengikut tahap prestasi, amalan bekerja dan sumbangan pekerja. Sebagai kesimpulan, kajian ini mendapati integrasi global bersama strategi responsif tempatan dan sistem ganjaran mengikut tahap prestasi mempunyai keberkatan yang lebih baik dengan saingan kompetitif. Aspek-aspek akademik, pengurusan, kekangan kajian dan cadangan untuk kajian seterusnya perlu dibincangkan.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to present the introduction of this study. It starts with the background of the study, problem statements, research questions, research objectives, scope of the study, significance of the study, operational definitions, and organization of the study.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the global market, firms need to build competitive advantage. Several empirical studies have shown that it is important for the firms in any particular country to create and sustain competitive advantage (Porter, 1991). Dunning (1995) found that sources of competitive advantage come from internal and external factors of the firms. Internal factors include people, management process, corporate culture, management practices, corporate strategy, corporate structure, etc. External factors include host culture, political imperativeness, market demands, foreign exchange rates, suppliers, labour unions, etc. (Dunning, 1995). The question how the firm achieves competitive advantage over competitors draws the researchers' interest to find out which internal and external factors explain differences of competitive success among firms (Porter, 1991).

For the firms that compete within the same market or environment, internal factors (such as strategy, corporate culture, management practices, company's technology, etc.) play a major role in the firm's success (Porter, 1991). Dunning

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